

**COMMUNITY DIALOG
ON
TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE**

Meeting Summary of April 30, 2003

Supervisor Bulova opened the seventh meeting of the Community Dialog on Transportation and Land Use by introducing Jim Zook, Sue Mittereder, Mike Long and Young Ho Chang. Jim Zook and Ho Chang had participated in discussions at past sessions and were present to answer questions of the group, or offer observations regarding the first draft recommendations to be presented. Fairfax County Legislative Liaison Sue Mittereder and County Attorney Mike Long are members of the County's legislative team. They work on legislative issues throughout the year, and work on behalf of Fairfax County in Richmond while the General Assembly is in session. Recommendations of the group that require legislative action, could become part of the County's legislative agenda and would be monitored and advocated for by Mike and Sue.

Supervisor Bulova said that once a final report of the Community Dialog on Transportation and Lane Use had been completed, she would present it to the Board of Supervisors, and also to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, the Council of Governments, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and any other pertinent groups and organizations that could benefit from the work of Dialog participants.

- **Land Use & Transportation Planning Group**

Jeff Nolan reported out from that group. Their report can be read as an attachment to this e-mail.

Discussion ensued about how many Out of Turn Plan Amendments and rezonings the Board of Supervisors considered each year. Jim Zook said that about 14 Out of Turn Plan Amendments were approved and probably about 60 rezonings. Supervisor Bulova said that many rezonings never make it to public hearing because they are withdrawn when they run into citizen opposition or if their application does not meet County criteria or standards during the review process. The Comp Plan process was discussed, regarding the different years for changes to the Plan to be considered.

A question was asked about whether the County could adopt a law that would require someone to own his/her property for a specific period of time before being allowed to request a rezoning. In response, Mr. Zook said that the County does not have the authority to adopt such a law. Virginia is considered a very strong property rights state and the chance of such a law passing would be slim.

The group talked about tunnels and bridges and discussed the difficulty of getting agreement between Virginia and Maryland on a link to create a bypass around the Northern Virginia region.

Before moving on to the next Sub Committee report, participants talked about the need for more specificity in the final recommendations. Someone should edit recommendations from the three groups so that there is a consistent format. Jeff Nolan said he would e-mail his summary and matrix to the Braddock District Office so that it could be distributed to the group and made part of the record.

- **Transportation Funding**

George Barker described his group as diverse. Their recommendations can be read as an attachment to this summary. **The recommendations are listed in priority order and should be done sequentially.**

Bob Kelly suggested a change to recommendation #1. He asked whether the term “Plan” should actually be an “Assessment” and there was agreement among the group.

Supervisor Bulova asked if in recommendation #3. (that an increased percentage of money from the County general funds be used for transportation bonds) the group had discussed how this would take funding away from County priorities? George Barker and members of that group responded that they had considered this, but felt transportation was a bigger problem than parks, libraries or even schools.

Regarding question #6, Sue Mittereder asked if the group was suggesting a regional or local tax? Mr. Barker said “regional”. Ms. Mittereder asked if, instead of increasing the sales tax, the group had considered looking for a greater variety of things the sales tax could be applied to (e.g. services, or remove some of the exemptions)?

In a discussion about reintroducing a regional sales tax referendum, Ho Chang offered that national trends indicate that tax initiatives to address transportation needs fail 50% of the time when they are first introduced. They often are met with success four to five years later after elected leaders work with the community to address concerns and build support.

The group briefly discussed a variety of potential taxes, such as the tax on cigarettes, tolls/Greenway project, and incremental transportation. Ho Chang described the widening and improvements to Rt. 28 which was funded by a special tax district, with 80% coming (voluntarily) from the commercial property owners in the corridor and 20% from the State. Another project, Centreville Rd., which came onto the State’s “Six Year Plan” at about the same time, is still waiting for State funding.

A brief discussion took place about air quality and sanctions that could be imposed on Northern Virginia if we do not meet new standards. Supervisor Bulova and Ho Chang commented that significant progress really comes from action taken at the federal level

(i.e.) tightening up on emissions. The bill Clear Skies being considered by Congress actually weakens our ability to reduce the emissions from power plants.

Regarding a suggestion that we could improve traffic congestion by synchronizing traffic lights, Supervisor Bulova and Ho Chang replied that VDOT had spent \$25 million synchronizing traffic lights in Fairfax County, Prince William County and Stafford. The area, however, is so oversaturated with traffic that the synchronization has resulted in very little improvement.

- **Legislative/Governmental Structural Changes**

Chris Craig reported on the work of the Legislative Sub-Committee. See their report and recommendations attached. He asked for, and received assurances that, the final report of the Community Dialog would be circulated to State legislators and Federal representatives.

Mr. Craig described his group's approach as "humble"; they focused on what is possible. They submitted a separate list of "proposals considered but not adopted".

A discussion took place on "strengthening the current proffer system" by adopting an impact fee system. Supervisor Bulova explained that Fairfax County had just adopted a mechanism for *requesting* (the law requires that proffers must be voluntary) funding for school construction during the building process. She was a strong supporter of doing this, however, other members of the Board felt differently. The measure passed, but required some compromise in order to take even that step. A formula was adopted just about a year ago. Supervisor Bulova and Jim Zook talked about the value of also retaining the County's ability to receive proffers that are tailored to a particular parcel's characteristics. She mentioned property on Zion Dr. where the developer eventually agreed to expensive road improvements, and agreed to solve a major area drainage problem that originated outside of the property. County Attorney Mike Long entered the discussion by cautioning that the County could find itself on very thin ice by going too far down the road with money contributions (proffers) for rezonings.

The seventh session of the Community Dialog concluded with a brief discussion about "next steps". The groups were charged with getting back together to fine tune their recommendations. **(About a week later, the group leaders were further charged with getting together to combine their recommendations into a unified slate to be presented for a vote on May 14th).** Supervisor Bulova said that the last meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order, with someone making a motion to accept the slate, and amendments or substitutes being offered to make changes.

The May 14th meeting will begin early, at 6:30 PM and food (pizza and egg rolls probably) will be provided. The group should plan on a longer than usual meeting,

so that sufficient time can be devoted to the adoption of a final slate of recommendations.

Staff:

Supervisor Sharon Bulova
Florence Naeve
Colin Campbell
Sally Tomlin
Miranda

County Staff on-hand to Answer Questions:

Jim Zook
Sue Mittereder
Mike Long
Young Ho Chang

Attendance:

Ms. Nancy Baltrusch
Mr. George Barker
Mr. James Buratti
Ms. Jan Hedetniemi
Mr. Loren Hershey
Ms. Nell Hurley
Mr. Robert Kelly
Mr. Paul Kite
Mr. Michael Malak
Ms. Phyliss McDevitt
Mr. Tom Meany
Mr. John Miranda
Mr. Jeffery Nolan
Ms. Barbara Nunes
Ms.. Judy Rexrode
Mr. Stewart Schwartz
Ms. Winnie Shapiro
Mr. Harry Stevenson
Mr. Ben Tribbett
Ms. Terry Wanbaugh
Mr. Mark Werfel
Ms. Barbara Williams